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Kilauea Sugar Plantation in 1912: A Snapshot

RARELY DO WE encounter a photo album that narrates a story of a place and life with such purpose and detail as that which arrived at the Hawaiian Historical Society in the summer of 2002. In May 1912, the Kilauea Sugar Plantation on Kaua'i's north shore came into view of Henry W. Thomas's camera. A visitor from San Francisco, Thomas produced a photographic record of sugar production and aspects of



FIG. 1. Matured Cane.

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The Hawaiian Journal of History, vol. 41 (2007)

plantation life in the early Territorial era capturing the look of a plantation through the camera's eye. With 249 photos clearly organized and labeled to describe the work of Kilauea Plantation in 1912, we have a document available nowhere else in Hawai'i's archives.

It seems Thomas had a mission to capture on film the daily business of sugar production from field to mill to wharf. His album of 3 x 5 inch amateur photographs, of 4–5 per page taken with the popular Kodak-type camera, has neat handwritten captions in white ink on black paper.¹ The carefully arrayed photos followed the sugar cane from field, through the mill, and onto vessels bound for Honolulu and to the California coast refineries. In addition, there are images of camp housing for the workers, Japanese schoolchildren, ranch activities, and reservoir building. Social events, including outings of *haole* [Caucasian] managers and spouses in contrast to workers of Asian descent, all document multiple aspects of plantation life.

Such a display of detail raises many questions—none of which the donor could answer. Who was H.W. Thomas—the name that appears embossed in gold on the leather cover of the album?² Was this person the photographer or was the camera shared with his wife? When were these photos taken? Why were they taken? What do these photographs tell us about the plantation and the sugar industry?

The album arrived at the Hawaiian Historical Society with a short cover letter containing this statement: "I hope that this photo album is of some historical interest to you. It seemed a shame to toss it, it is so carefully put together with lovely script. I don't know how my stepfather-in-law came into possession of this album."³ Understanding the album's narrative requires that we determine who took the photos, when, and why. Clues to the "who" and "when" came early in the research. Kilauea Sugar Plantation Company's annual report lists H.W. Thomas as secretary of the board of directors as early as 1902⁴ until 1917.⁵ Most likely the primary photographer was Mr. Thomas, as the majority of the photos illustrate sugar-related plantation activities. Mrs. Thomas probably captured a number of the social scenes as she is often not in them. The first clue as to the date of 1912 came from an inscription on the back of one of many loose photographs sent with the album picturing several men in baseball uniforms posing for the camera: "The Kilauea Baseball team won the cup for Kauai 1912." Later research confirmed that the Thomases visited the plantation that year, as several of the photographs depict work on the Kaloko⁶

reservoir and dam, which company records indicate was completed in 1912.⁷ Late in the research, a news article in the Kaua'i newspaper reported that Mr. and Mrs. Thomas spent ten days in Kilauea at manager Jack Meyers' home in May.⁸

The "why" proved more difficult to determine. The images indicate a visit that included business with touring. Most images document plantation work. However, the Thomases also toured nearby Hanalei, and were guests of honor for luncheons and picnics, capturing many of these events on film.

THE PHOTOGRAPHER(S)

Henry W. Thomas was from the San Francisco office of Kilauea Sugar Plantation Company,⁹ owned in 1912 by William G. Irwin and by John D. and Adolph Spreckels, sons of Claus Spreckels, the San Francisco sugar magnate who opened up extensive lands on the Wailuku plains



FIG. 2. Mr. and Mrs.
H.W. Thomas

of Maui to cane production. Thomas was the secretary of the board of directors for Kilauea and for three other plantations owned by Spreckels interests—Paauhau, Hakalau, and Hutchinson plantations on the Big Island. In 1912 C. Brewer & Company was the agent, having acquired an interest from W.G. Irwin in 1909. Apparently, Thomas had visited Hawai‘i at least once, if not several, times before. In 1900 the U.S. Census records for the Hanalei District, which includes Kilauea, recorded his presence at Kilauea Plantation. At that time, he worked for San Francisco’s Oceanic Steamship Company, a Spreckels line serving Hawai‘i. That same year he visited the plantation in 1900 to help W.G. Irwin and Company set up a bookkeeping system.¹⁰ Continuing in his role as secretary of the board, Thomas became auditor in 1908 and continued to travel to Hawai‘i and visit Spreckels Brothers & Co. plantations.¹¹ Quite familiar with the Kilauea Plantation by 1912, Henry Thomas’s images of plantation activity reflect a businessman’s intimate knowledge of day-to-day details. Information about Mrs. Thomas, however, did not materialize, except that from about 1907 to 1916, she and Henry Thomas lived in Piedmont, California—a small wealthy enclave outside of Oakland.¹² After 1916, information on the Thomases disappeared from San Francisco and Oakland directories. In the 1920 US Census, they were no longer listed at the Piedmont address. However, Mrs. Thomas is listed in a ship’s registrar for travel between Honolulu and San Francisco.¹³

H.W. THOMAS, THE PLANTATION, AND THE INDUSTRY

The records of Kilauea Plantation begin in 1877 with the planting and purchasing of mill equipment. E.P Adams and Robert A. Macfie, Jr. (son of a Liverpool sugar refiner) were majority investors. William Green and Sanford B. Dole (later governor of Hawai‘i) held minority interests. In 1880 the four men incorporated the Kilauea Sugar Company as a Hawai‘i’ corporation,¹⁴ just a few years after the Reciprocity Treaty between the Hawaiian Kingdom and the U.S. created a boom in sugar plantation development. Details of the plantation’s operation for the first 20 years are sketchy, but letters between E.H. Allen (in Washington, D.C.) and W.F. Allen (managing the Princeville Plantation next to Kilauea) indicate that the investment in Kilauea was overambitious.¹⁵ By 1881, W. F. Allen reported to his brother:

I am told that Adams [*sic*] plantation is still nearly \$300,000 in debt. That this last crop of 730 tons did but little more than pay expenses for the past year. Adams has had a very serious loss in his business here in Honolulu.¹⁶

H. Hackfeld served as the first business agent, but by 1885, W.G. Irwin and Company became agent,¹⁷ more than likely as an investor to cover the debt.

By 1890, G. R. Ewart replaced the long-time manager, Robert Macfie, Jr. and an expanded plantation employed 550 workers.¹⁸ The next decade, however, was still one of difficulty. Walter M. Giffard reported in 1897 to Irwin, "I do not see that Kilauea is making any headway in reducing her debt, as she stands just the same on December 31st, 1897 as she stood December 31st, 1896."¹⁹

With annexation of Hawai'i to the U.S. pending, J.D. and Adolph Spreckels, sons of Claus Spreckels, joined Irwin and incorporated the plantation in California as Kilauea Sugar Plantation Company. The plantation continued to prove disappointing to San Francisco investors; debt stood around \$400,000 in 1907.²⁰ Irwin wrote back:

We have hammered away on this plantation for about 20 years All I can say about Kilauea is that if we can bring it up to a standard of 5,000 tons of sugar per year, and keep down the running expenses, that we may eventually bring it up, otherwise I shall go in strongly for closing the place up the same as has been done with Ookala.²¹

One of a handful of plantations owned by San Francisco capitalists after the 1898 annexation,²² Kilauea Plantation was unique in its position in Hawai'i's sugar industry. The owners, far removed from the islands and active in other business developments in California, left plantation matters to their Honolulu agents and viewed their interests primarily as investments. Periodically visitors from San Francisco, such as secretary H.W. Thomas, arrived to inspect their property. Records indicate that smaller San Francisco shareholders, Edward Pollitz, Henry St. Goar, and Walter D.K. Gibson, visited Kilauea, Hutchinson, and Paauhau plantations to look at investment possibilities in water development or updated machinery. There is no record of either J.D. or A. B. Spreckels visiting Kilauea, even though they controlled two-thirds of the interest. Irwin, it appears, represented their interests.

Correspondence between Irwin (who moved to San Francisco after 1907) and his Honolulu office manager, W. M. Giffard, is full of references to drought, Kilauea's old machinery that needed replacement, and disappointing yields of juice from the cane.²³ By 1908, Irwin and Henry Thomas (representing Spreckels Brothers & Co.) were the primary correspondents from San Francisco on plantation matters for Kilauea, Paauhau, and Hutchinson. Irwin grew weary of this responsibility, complaining that year to Giffard, his long-time partner in Honolulu:

John D. [Spreckels] has simply lost all interest in business matters, so far as the Islands are concerned and he seems to have taken up his residence in San Diego, where I trust he may make a better success of it than he has the Island business. I have held business for the firm single-handed for many years past, but there is a limit to what I can do, especially when the firm with which we have been so intimate, fails to do their share of the work.²⁴

This led Irwin to sell his agency and his interest in Kilauea to C. Brewer in 1910. With the agency dissolved, Giffard turned his interest to the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association (HSPA), as he was no longer affiliated with Kilauea Sugar Plantation Company. Henry Thomas, however, remained secretary of the corporation representing the continued Spreckels' interest. His trip to Kilauea in 1912 then, continued a tradition of inspection and oversight.

The backdrop of financial woes, absentee ownership, and anxious investors help explain the photographer's motivation and perspective in putting the album together. The Kilauea photos provide a record of the typical, frequent plantation "inspection." It documents the interest of distant owners in the plantation's state of affairs. Because Kilauea was just one of the plantations owned by investors outside Hawai'i, this album is unique. For Honolulu capitalists who could visit with ease to obtain information about their plantation investments, there was no need for a photographic record.

The fact that Mrs. Thomas also made the trip in 1912 may account for the images that capture the social world of *haole* managers and tourist outings. Beyond the dynamics of cane production for the market, the photographs that show us the divided worlds of plantation life may be the result of Mrs. Thomas's presence and interests.²⁵ A tool of

history-making, the camera can document details unreported in plantation managers' reports, financial ledgers, or production statistics. It also is a view into the mind of the photographer, who *chooses* images and turns them into objects of importance, thus relegating other subjects to insignificance.

The Thomases arrived at Kilauea Plantation at a time when the Hawai'i sugar industry experienced the first changes brought by territorial status in 1900. The industry was operating in high gear, investing in capital developments encouraged by guaranteed markets for Hawai'i's sugar. Water projects (irrigation ditches, reservoirs, tunnels, artesian wells) rapidly expanded available acreage for cane cultivation, which demanded larger mills and new workers from Korea and the Philippines to expand the predominant Japanese labor force. Annexation brought new forms of labor force organization. Elimination of the indentured contract created a pay system based upon hiring of day-laborers and independent contractors who provided gang workers for specific time-limited jobs. No longer tied to three-year contracts, workers demanded higher wages and organized strikes on individual plantations. In response to the O'ahu strike of 1909, the entire industry began to regulate itself and set industry-wide wages for agreed-upon employment classifications.²⁶ Plantations also confronted outbreaks of disease such as diphtheria, cholera, and bubonic plague. U.S. government intervention (closing of Honolulu Harbor to shipping) and the Territorial Board of Health demands for public health measures on plantations brought changes in housing design and sanitation requirements for worker camps. The Thomases arrived with their camera during a period of rapid change in Hawai'i's sugar business. Much of what they recorded speaks to this turbulent period in plantation history. It was a time of industrial consolidation, reform, and hubris—clearly captured in their meticulous display of plantation life at Kilauea Plantation.

A NARRATIVE OF PRODUCTION AND SOCIAL DIVISION

The Kilauea album is an intentional narrative of sugar production with attention to improvements and advancement. Thomas documents the production process with an intentional sequence of images from field to mill to wharf. Top-down control of labor and careful orga-

nization of tasks are critical to a successful operation. He integrated several corollary sectors of the plantation system—from ranching, to water development, to worker housing—illustrating the complexity of organization. There is special attention paid toward visible signs of plantation improvement and advancement at Kilauea in 1912. Photos of housing, camps, and reservoir building projects attest to the manager's various development projects that year.

Perhaps inadvertently, the Thomases' photographs caught many details of the divided social worlds of workers and managers at Kilauea. The camera records workers primarily at work in the sugar cane fields, on the ranch, at the wharf, or in the mill. Posed either with equipment or actively at work on a task, the lives of the Japanese, Filipinos, Chinese, Koreans, and Portuguese who worked at Kilauea seem defined solely by their job. Camp life images capture children, dogs, and women with laundry, but seem devoid of the texture of family or community life. The social world of the *haole* manager, skilled workers and their wives, on the other hand, appears socially vibrant in contrast. They talk, eat together, and congregate in groups of men, women, and children. There are times for picnics, luncheons, tennis, and visits to picturesque Hanalei and Kaua'i's northern most point to catch sharks—all recorded on film. Captured in the images from the album, these themes become apparent below as one travels through the album.

THE PLANTATION CENTER

Plantation life throughout the islands in the early 1900s was centered on a landscape of buildings that reflected the system of tight control over workers and production.

The mill, a composite of chemical and physical processes, required quick delivery of cut cane to preserve the sucrose content. Distinct from fieldwork, the machinery dictated the quality of product. The mill also required centralized organization of fieldwork. Mills were replaced and upgraded frequently, requiring heavy capitalization. Expensive mills, in turn, required increased efficiency in field labor and expansion of the tons per acre of sugar.

Most sugar plantations held membership in the HSPA, which provided scientific advice, conducted research, and enabled sharing of



FIG. 3. Plantation mill, yard, and office.

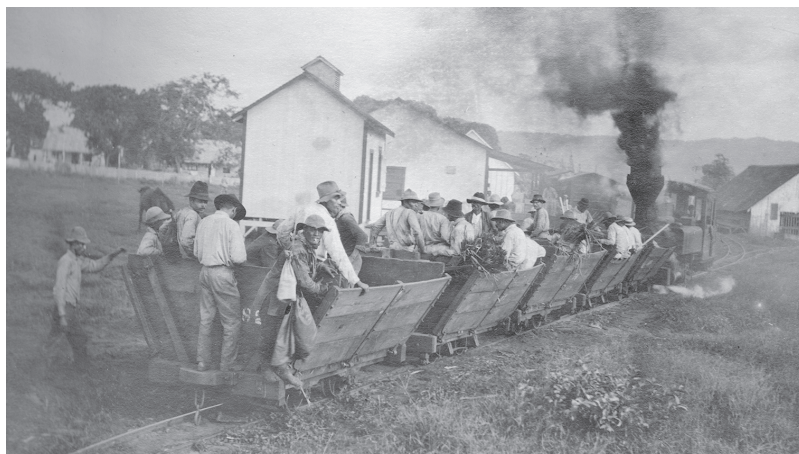


FIG. 4. Laborers' Train.

information among sugar producers. In the early 1900s, the cane borer insect pest threatened the yields of several plantations, including Kilauea. HSPA dedicated its resources toward finding an insect predator, and sent its entomologist, Fred Muir, on several long trips beginning in 1908 to collect insect parasite candidates. After three years, Muir brought the New Guinea tachinid fly to Honolulu to colonize it at the experiment station. It proved to be the solution. Kilauea



FIG. 5. Pay Day.

Plantation, one of the experimental sites for their introduction, set up tents to house the maturing flies soon to be released into the cane fields. The flies worked and HSPA publications no longer spoke about the cane borer threat.²⁷ Thomas included several photos of the experimental cane plots and tachnid fly tents in the album. Photos of experimental cane fields were also included to highlight plantation cooperation with HSPA efforts to increase yields. All plantations, especially the smaller ones such as Kilauea, relied heavily upon the entomologists, foresters, and chemists of HSPA to manage pests, find new varieties of cane, develop cost-effective techniques in the mill and field, and maintain watersheds for irrigation and reservoirs.

Thomas's camera caught images of camp housing and scenes which prompt the viewer to wonder why these particular images were embedded between photos of the plantation center's buildings and workers in the field. In 1912, Kaua'i plantations were in the midst of a building campaign for new housing. Provoked by public health requirements issued from the U.S. government and the Territorial Board of Health, Kaua'i embarked upon a sanitation program which was not completed until 1919 at the last plantation—Kilauea.²⁸ Henry Thomas recorded details of barracks and cottage-style housing, laundry yards, workers' pigpens, and garbage collection. These are not the scenes of life in the camps so much as documentation of facilities



FIG. 6. Korean Camp.



FIG. 7. Chinese Camp.

at Kilauea that needed significant investment and attention from the board of directors in San Francisco.

The years 1911–1912 marked the height of a sanitation initiative in Hawai'i to prevent the spread of diseases like diphtheria, leprosy, cholera, and the plague. During the previous decade, outbreaks of these diseases alarmed health officials, brought shipping and commerce to a halt for days and weeks at a time, and proved disastrous



FIG. 8. Fish Market.



FIG. 9. Camp Scene. [Animal pen.]

to sugar interests, which then clamored for a preventative strategy. As a result, in 1911 the Territorial legislature passed laws that strengthened the Territorial Board of Health by providing new staff—especially sanitary inspectors for Honolulu, the other islands, and plantation camps. Inspectors visited, mapped, and documented plantation



FIG. 10. Cleaning Camp.



FIG. 11. Camp Scene.

conditions.²⁹ The governor of Hawai'i, Walter Frear, reported to the U.S. Secretary of the Interior:

The principal sources of danger are the tenement houses in the towns and plantation labor camps in the country. Arrangements have been made in many cases by which the plantation provides the salary of a sanitary inspector, who is appointed and directed entirely by the depart-



FIG. 12. Japanese Children.



FIG. 13. Camp Scene.

ment of public health; some of the plantations have erected and are maintaining isolation wards and have provided emergency disinfecting apparatus; many have destroyed old labor camps, thinned out crowded ones, and built new camps on the cottage plan with proper sewerage and other sanitary arrangements.³⁰

On Kauaʻi, sanitary inspector Frank B. Cook worked with plantation managers to develop sanitation improvement plans.³¹ Correspondence about Kilauea in 1912 between Kauaʻi inspector Cook and the Board of Health in Honolulu discussed what to do with the lack of action by plantation manager Myers. Work was already underway in collecting and dumping garbage away from camp housing, but changes in living quarters seemed slow.³² Finally, in 1919, Kilauea Plantation issued its plan for sanitation.

WORK IN THE FIELD

Thomas' portrait of fieldwork (the tasks, the workers, and the multiple-level technologies that powered the plantation) highlights the labor-intensive nature of sugar cultivation. All the fieldwork photographs emphasize the task performed and document the clothing required for the job, the variety of tools and machinery utilized, and the sheer volume of physical work required. The workers themselves appear incidental, however essential they are to completion of the task. The camera, catching each step of field preparation and cultivation as well as the necessary side tasks to maintain a healthy sugar crop, are displayed in sequence: Grubbing tree stumps; harrowing, plowing, and cultivating; planting cane and liming the soil to reduce acidity; cutting and loading cane onto carts that enter the field using portable rail tracks—over 60 photos document the laborious task of producing cane for the mill.

Thomas's camera also documented the ironies of plantation field technology typical in 1912. Bullock and mules that pulled plowing equipment worked alongside steam plows and gasoline caterpillar tractors to prepare the field for cane planting. Locomotive-driven carts and mule-pulled wagons hauled the cane to the mill.

Workers in these photos serve as props to explain how a specific task is accomplished. Notations in the album do not distinguish between

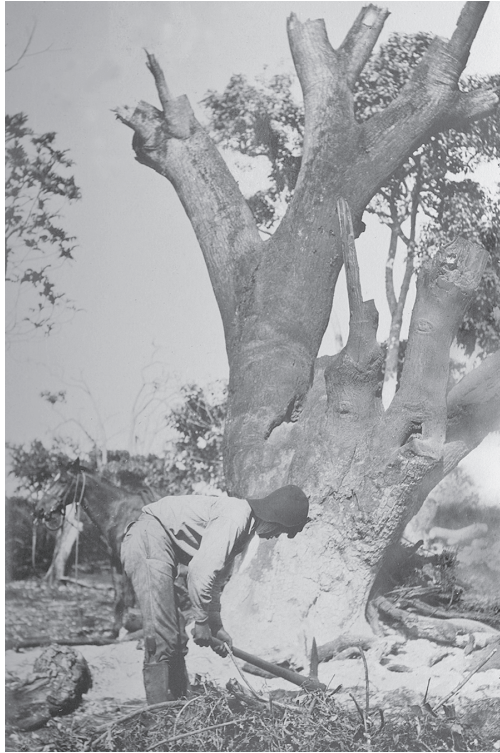


FIG. 14. Grubbing Trees.



FIG. 15. Steam Plowing.



FIG. 16. Caterpillar.



FIG. 17. Women Hoeing.

groups of workers except by gender. Plantation payroll records inform us that Kilauea Plantation workers in 1912 numbered approximately 800. Ethnic groups included Portuguese, Puerto Rican, Hawaiian, Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, and Korean workers, and *haole* managers and supervisors.³³ Thomas's images illustrate the work regimen and document women working in the field alongside men and in separate task groups.

Payroll books for June 1912 show about 23 skilled men and over 700 unskilled men and women worked at the plantation. Smaller than most other plantations, Kilauea paid workers and organized their



FIG. 18. Loading Cane



FIG. 19. Spreading Lime.

tasks in line with the rest of the industry—consequences of HSPA's pressure after the 1909 strike to conform to an industry standard. The largest pay differentiation was between men and women, with men of all ethnicities (except Korean) working for \$20.00 a day. Women received \$13.00 a day. Plantation record-keeping details numbers of workers by their ethnicity. Women and men of seven ethnicities and



FIG. 20. Laying Portable Track.



FIG. 21. Hauling Cane with Mules.

nationalities were represented on the 1912 payroll: 385 Japanese, 97 Filipinos, 59 Portuguese, 41 Puerto Ricans, 29 Chinese, 18 Koreans, and 6 Hawaiians. Women (Puerto Rican, Portuguese, and Japanese) total 40, and minors 27.³⁴

All plantations in 1912 hired unskilled workers by the day or by the “contract” for specific tasks supervised by a “contractor.” This was a different system from the contract labor of the pre-territorial period when workers were assigned to multi-year contracts on individual

plantations. Instead, contractors were individuals who signed agreements with plantation managers to complete seasonal tasks when the plantation needed an expanded labor force to cut and transport cane, prepare new fields, or build and repair reservoirs. The contractor collected the payment and paid workers that they recruited for a short period. Plantation day workers, on the other hand, worked directly for the plantation and were considered more permanent employees. After the 1909 O'ahu strike, sugar industry leaders decided to pay contract workers more than day workers, whom they perceived to be the source of the strike problems.³⁵ Correspondence among managers in the individual island planter associations from the 1910s shows planters believed they could keep the price of labor down by emphasizing a contracting system and minimizing day labor.³⁶

THE IMPORTANCE OF WATER

Kilauea Sugar Plantation Company's thirst for water to irrigate its cane led to continuous construction of reservoirs, ditches, and water delivery systems. Once built, reservoirs were regularly enlarged and improved. Company records show detailed accounts of rainfall, water levels in the reservoirs, and written reports to the San Francisco stockholders describing the harm to thirsty cane fields from prolonged dry or wet weather. Kilauea's early sugar production relied solely on rainfall in the 1880s. In line with other plantations on Hawai'i's rainy northeastern coasts, rainfall declined as the forest line receded. Kilauea, which began building its reservoirs in the late 1880s, first with Kaloko, brought in a noted California engineer in 1900 to inspect the reservoir and water distribution system and recommend improvements. At this time, the Territory was becoming increasingly dependent upon water collection and transmission systems for its cane production. High capacity modern sugar mills required extensive acreages to make them worth the investment and encouraged expansion of cane acreage onto nearby drier lands needing irrigation. All plantations, even in rainy wet regions, had reservoir and water systems to improve productivity and guard against more frequent droughts caused by deforestation. This constant pressure for higher yields altered Hawai'i's water landscape. The natural course of streams diverted to numerous reservoirs held by earthen dams, miles

of ditches, and tunnels of water through mountains turned Hawai'i's natural hydrological systems into an industrial delivery system for sugar cane.

Kilauea Plantation could not afford to build the elaborate tunnel and water delivery systems found on O'ahu. Instead, between 1890 and the 1910s the company constructed a network of reservoirs and ditches to catch runoff from the Moloa'a forest reserve to water the fields. When Thomas visited in 1912, the plantation was busy with reservoir construction, repairs, and expansion. He documents work at Kaloko Reservoir, Kalihi Wai Reservoir, Waiuli Dam, and Stone Dam. Several photos also display Kilauea's earth-lined ditches.



FIG. 22. Waiuli Dam.



FIG. 23. Main Ditch.



FIG. 24. Stone Dam.



FIGS. 25-27 (facing page). Construction of Koloko expansion.



MILL AND WHARF

Skilled workers typically worked in the mill, grinding, boiling, clarifying the sugar, and at the wharf, hoisting bags of raw sugar onto a schooner headed to Honolulu. Thomas's limited presentation of mill photos is most likely because of the time of year when the mill



FIG. 28. Laboratory.

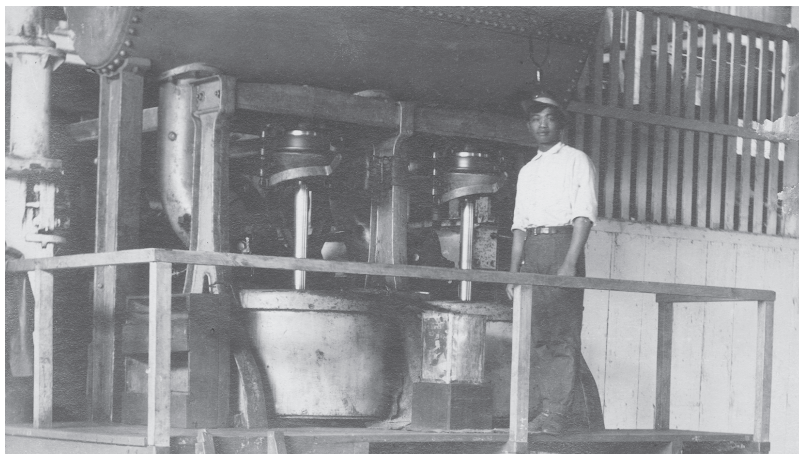


FIG. 29. Centrifugals.



FIG. 30. Shipping Sugar.

was not in full operation. His mill images are of workers posed next to machines rather than in action. The more dynamic photos of the plantation's Kahili Landing, however, provide a sense of the difficulty in moving bagged sugar from land to sea along a treacherous coastline.



FIG. 31. Receiving Freight.

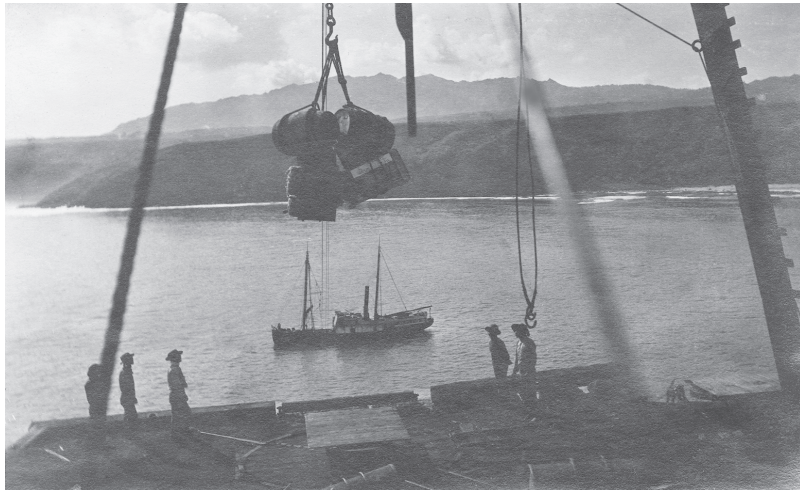


FIG. 32. Kahili Landing.

THE RANCH

All plantations, even the smallest such as Kilauea, had ranch lands above their cane fields (utilizing pastures at elevations where cane did not grow well.) These ranches bred, raised, and cared for animals that powered and fed the plantation. From the earliest days, Hawai'i's plantations included ranches and extensive acreage for pasture. Typi-



FIG. 33. Branding.

cally, Native Hawaiian workers managed ranching activities and provided teamster support for cultivation and hauling cane in the field.

TWO SOCIAL WORLDS

People living on Kilauea Plantation inhabited two distinct worlds divided by work and domestic life. Ethnicity certainly marked differences in physical spaces such as camp housing. But the division between the two classes of managers (including skilled workers) and unskilled workers set the definitive boundary. The script under Thomas's pictures identify worker camps by their ethnicity. In the images of work and leisure activities, however, the demarcation between management and labor was most pronounced. For instance, the gatherings for meals caught in Thomas's lens, illustrate the differences. In honor of the Thomases' visit, plantation luncheons in the yard of the manager's house and a picnic at the Kauai Electric intake in the mountains behind the fields, brought together the manager and skilled workers with their families around formal dining events with servants and tablecloths. Several photographs of workers on a lunch break in the cane fields capture the sense of a hurried event under the supervision of overseers.



FIG. 34. Luncheon at the intake Kauai Electric Co.



FIG. 35. Luncheon with Servant.

Social worlds overlapped in specific spaces and on special occasions. The Thomases took several photographs of a plantation-wide event where the two social worlds mingle around a flag-raising with workers dressed in their best suits, and Japanese children in traditional clothing pose with their teacher for the photographer.



FIG. 36. Water Carrier.



FIG. 37. Luncheon.

In this large Japanese community, students attended regular school plus the Japanese language school, Kilauea Hongwanji School, in the afternoon after regular classes.³⁷ Thomas photographed what would be a less-known feature of plantation life at a point when an event accentuates the differences in the social world.

Thomas also visited during the year that Kilauea Plantation won the baseball cup on Kaua'i. A photo of the players shows mainly skilled and a few day-labor employees whose names are listed in a *Garden Island News* article about the winning team. Most of these names are in

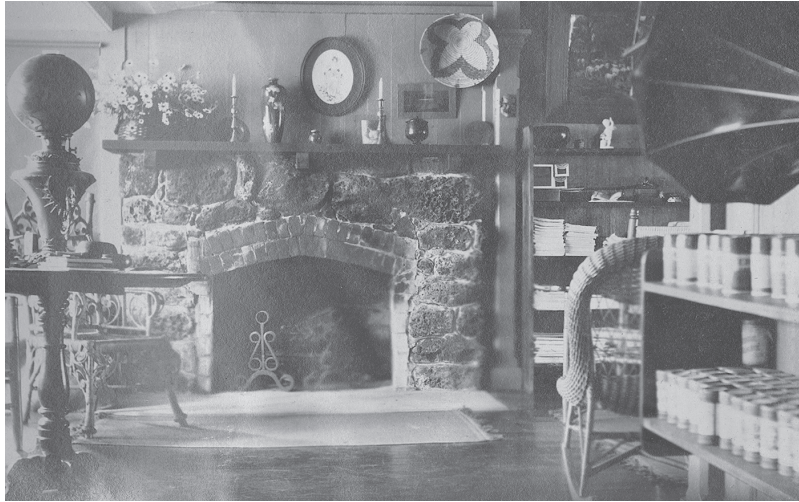


FIG. 38. Interior of manager's house.



FIG. 39. Japanese Children in Traditional Dress.

the plantation payroll books for 1912 as skilled workers.³⁸ This group of workers typically served as the social buffer between the *haole* managers and the multi-ethnic workforce as overseers and at plantation social events. Primarily European, part-Hawaiian, and Portuguese, these men are depicted in Thomas's album in multiple roles. Some



FIG. 40. Kilauea Baseball Team won the cup for Kauai in 1912.

are included in photos of men and women at the manager's luncheons and picnics and tourist outings organized perhaps for the benefit of the Thomases. At times they are relaxing at outings to Hanalei, or at work in the mill and at the landing operating machinery. We know little about the role of these skilled workers in the plantation social world, but Thomas's images suggest it may have been multi-faceted.

Of special interest in the Kilauea album is the inclusion of Mrs. Yanagihara (wife of Dr. Yanagihara) in images of social events for women. Clearly, she was included in the exclusive group of *haole* women that welcomed the Thomases. Mrs. Yanagihara, born in Hawai'i, was a teacher at the Kilauea public school.³⁹ Her husband, Kichitaro Yanagihara, born and educated in Japan, became the physician at Kilauea Plantation Hospital in 1900. In 1905, the Territorial Board of Health appointed him government physician for Hanalei District on Kaua'i, the first Japanese in Hawai'i to hold such a position.⁴⁰ The inclusion of the Yanagiharas in several of the social events welcoming a corporation officer from San Francisco illustrates that class and profession, rather than ethnicity, demarcated the primary separation of the two social worlds—that of plantation managers and overseers and that of field, mill, wharf, and ranch workers.

We are fortunate that Mr. and Mrs. H.W. Thomas brought their camera to Kilauea in 1912. Through their eyes, we see the industrial

plantation from the perspective of owners and stockholders interested in increasing productivity and improvement of operations, and the plantation community as a necessary, but unremarkable, appendage to that pursuit. Much is missing from their narrative of images that others from different positions in the social hierarchy might photograph if presented the opportunity. Nevertheless, we have a rich portrait of Kilauea Plantation that provides multiple layers of information about work and life in Hawai'i's sugar industry in 1912.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author is grateful for the thoughtful reading and suggested changes from Chieko Tachihata, Emeritus Librarian, and for bibliographic aid from Jodie Mattos, Librarian, both at Hamilton Library, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

NOTES

- ¹ The captions from the album are produced here verbatim. Information added for clarity by the author is in brackets.
- ² The embossed name in the lower left hand corner reads: Mr. and Mrs. H.W. Thomas.
- ³ Donor letter, July, 2002. HHS.
- ⁴ Published Annual Reports for Kilauea Sugar Plantation Company are not available before 1902.
- ⁵ Thomas was not listed as Secretary in the 1917 report. In fact, there was no secretary of the board listed.
- ⁶ The appropriate name for the reservoir is Kaloko. However, company records and the inscriptions in the album use the spelling Koloko.
- ⁷ Kilauea Sugar Plantation records are available at the Kaua'i Historical Society. Kaloko Dam information can be found in financial accounts for 1910–1912, the period during which the dam was enlarged.
- ⁸ *Garden Island*. May 28, 1912.
- ⁹ Kilauea Sugar Plantation Company was the official name of the corporation in 1912. Hereafter referred to as Kilauea Plantation or Kilauea.
- ¹⁰ Walter M. Giffard to W.G. Irwin. July 10, 1900. W.M. Giffard Papers. Hawaiian Collection, Hamilton Library, University of Hawai'i Mānoa. (Hereafter UHM.)
- ¹¹ W.M. Giffard to W.G. Irwin. December 17, 1908. Giffard Papers. UHM.
- ¹² *San Francisco 1907 City Directory*.
- ¹³ Henry Walter Thomas was born in Pennsylvania on April 13, 1865. Gertrude Olivia Thomas was born in Canada on March 16, 1872. Henry W. and Gertrude O. Thomas are listed along with a servant as occupants in their Piedmont, Cali-

for home in the 1910 *US Federal Census*. In the 1920 Census, their home is listed as rented under the name of the Humburg family. In 1921, Gertrude Thomas appears on the ship's register for the *Empire State* sailing from Honolulu to San Francisco. *California Passenger and Crew Lists, 1893-1957*. Ancestry.com [database on-line]. Henry Thomas died February 7, 1917, age 51. Gertrude Thomas died June 11, 1931, age 59. Both are buried at Mountain View Cemetery, Piedmont, California.

- ¹⁴ Articles of Incorporation Kilauea Sugar Company. Department of Commerce. Series 256. Vol. 2. AH.
- ¹⁵ W.F. Allen to E.H. Allen. January 31, 1880. Elisha. H. Allen Papers. Library of Congress.
- ¹⁶ W.F. Alen to E. H. Allen. January 17, 1881. Allen Papers. LC.
- ¹⁷ HHA, 1885.
- ¹⁸ HHA, 1891.
- ¹⁹ W. M. Giffard to W.G. Irwin. January 11, 1897. Giffard Papers. UHM.
- ²⁰ W.M. Giffard to W.G. Irwin. August 22, 1908. Giffard Papers. UHM.
- ²¹ W.G. Irwin to W.M. Giffard. September 1, 1908. Giffard Papers. UHM.
- ²² Other Spreckels Brothers & Co. interests in the early 1900s included Paauhau. Hakalau, and Hutchinson plantations on the Big Island.
- ²³ W.M. Giffard to W.G. Irwin. August 18, 1900. Giffard Papers. UHM.
- ²⁴ W.G. Irwin to W.M. Giffard. November 4, 1908. Giffard Papers. UHM.
- ²⁵ A number of group photos with women and guests of the plantation's managerial class show Mrs. Thomas carrying what appears to be the camera case.
- ²⁶ The Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association organized individual island planter associations after 1900 whose primary purpose was to set wages and discourage labor upheaval. Correspondence of these associations is located in the HSPA Archives, Hawaiian Collection, Hamilton Library, UHM, and can be found in the records of individual plantations, which are also located there.
- ²⁷ HSPA's *Planter's Monthly* included regular reports on the New Guinea cane borer from 1908 until 1913, after which the tachinid fly proved to be a successful cane borer parasite. Muir sent detailed reports of his travels that were published in the HSPA monthly journal. See *Planters Record* for 1911 (Vol. 5), p. 325-27 for a good overview.
- ²⁸ Welfare and Sanitation on Kilauea Plantation, 1919-1920. Committee and Department Records. Box 27. Kilauea Sugar Plantation Company Records. Kaua'i Historical Society.
- ²⁹ Correspondence to and from the Board of Health (AH) during this period documents efforts of sanitary inspectors on the islands to elicit the support of plantation managers in cleaning up camps and constructing new housing for workers.
- ³⁰ Report of the Governor of the Territory of Hawaii. 1911. p.79.
- ³¹ Correspondence between F.B. Cook, Inspector for Hawaii and the Territorial Board of Health in 1911-1912. Territorial Board of Health. Board of Health Sanitation Officers. Series 335. AH.

³² Correspondence, F.B. Cook and Territorial Board of Health, 1911–1912, and 1919.

³³ Information on labor is from Kilauea Sugar Plantation Company Records, Kilauea Plantation Archives, Payroll Book, June 1912. Volume 55, Kaua'i Historical Society.

³⁴ Kilauea Payroll Book, June 1912.

³⁵ The payroll book records 7,216 days in June 1912 of contract work, and 4,940 days of skilled work.

³⁶ See footnote 24.

³⁷ In 1917, for which the earliest figures are available, Kilauea Hongwanji School had 42 students and was a school of the Buddhist temple. Report of the Governor of Hawaii, 1917. p. 71.

³⁸ *Garden Island*. Earlier in the season, several (but probably not all) players were listed—apparently more than in the Thomas photo. April 23, 1912; May 14, 1912. Joe Pacheco, Theo. Pacheco, Ant. Rapozo, Joe Palmiera, Hiroishi, Soichi Ozaki, Dan Lovell, Serephine Jacinth, Jno. Gabriel, Manuel Jacinth, Billy Kerr, Geo. Akana, Jno. Akana, Forencio Vicente, W. Wood, W. F. Sanbourn, Hadfield, Cooper, Macfie, K. Myers, Matsu, Kenji, Sam Kai, Chas. Huddy, C. White, Ben Iida. This list mixed overseers, skilled workers and professionals, and field laborers from several ethnic communities on the plantation.

³⁹ Mrs. Yanagihara was listed as a public school teacher at Kilauea school in 1910–12. Report of the Superintendent of Public Schools. Territory of Hawai'i. 1910–12. p. 212.

⁴⁰ In Memoriam Index. Hawaii Medical Library, Honolulu.